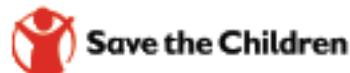




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**USAID/Empowering new generations to Improve Nutrition and Economic opportunities (ENGINE)**





# USAID/ENGINE Case Studies (Amhara)

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH)



*Mother of 2 and Chair of WASH saving group Tsegaye Delele using her tippy tap, South Achefer, Amhara*

Tsegaye Delele, aged 30, lives in Abichikele kebele in South Achefer woreda. She has two children; a boy of 8 and a girl aged 5 and was selected in 2012 as a USAID/ENGINE beneficiary. She was initially provided with 17 chickens (15 chicken and 2 cockerels). As a result, Tsegaye and her family's diet changed as she started consuming eggs outside of the fasting seasons when she follows a vegan diet. Receiving an average of 10 eggs a day from her chickens means Tsegaye can now make extra money selling half of what her hens produce. Alongside the chicken, Tsegaye and her family also received Swiss chard, carrot, cabbage, kale and mango seedlings as well as tools to cultivate a homestead garden. Prior to the project's interventions, cabbage was a staple for the area but the family had little access to other types of vegetables. "Growing all these vegetables enriched my diet. I am now able to eat so many varied things." Says Tsegaye. With money from the sale of eggs and surplus produce from her homestead garden, Tsegaye bought a heifer with the aid of a match funding scheme from USAID/ENGINE where she raised 50% of the cost and the project provided the remaining 50%. About two years after being selected as a USAID/ENGINE beneficiary, in 2014, Tsegaye's saving group began receiving support from the project to implement WASH activities. She is the chair of the group which consists of 10 female members. The group was supported by ENGINE to improve awareness in the community on the importance of hygiene and sanitation, build and sell latrine slabs, water filters and clean play mats for children. The group generates income from the production and sale of WASH materials. In 2015, 73 slabs were produced by the group and 42 were sold for 110 ETB each to the wider community, particularly to households with children under the age of two. "I really enjoy selling something so useful to my community. The slabs prevent diseases, are easy to use and prevent the danger of children slipping and falling into pits." Says Tsegaye proudly. In addition to the slabs, the group had also sold 470 mats at 70 ETB. The group has however faced some difficulties. Tracking finances is hard due to members' lack of education. The water filters which cost 310 ETB are deemed too expensive by the community and therefore the group has not managed to sell all 470 filters they received despite attempts to team up with the kebele and the local health center to improve sales. Lack of time due to other farming duties has also meant promotional activities planned by the group sometimes suffer. Despite the challenges, there's been a dramatic change to Tsegaye's own life as a result of being a member of the WASH group. Tsegaye used to carry 20 liters of water on her head or back and walk for an hour every day. Her time used to be further consumed by having to line up for 1 hour and 30 minutes at the well for her turn to fetch water. Thanks to a new well dug in her backyard that the saving group has constructed, she no longer has this burden. The tippy tap she built allows her to operate it with her feet without touching the faucet which means the family is not exposed to bacteria. Tsegaye was also one of two households in the kebele that USAID/ENGINE supported with wheelbarrows to decrease the workload; she uses the wheelbarrow to carry water and compost for her homestead garden. She also participated in training on household decision making which the project organized in collaboration with the woreda's Women's Affairs and Agriculture Offices. "We learnt that money issues have to be discussed and how we [husbands and wives] have to be considerate to each other when it comes to decision making."

## Quality Improvement (QI)



Wonde Yebeltal, Delivery Case Team Head at Yetnore Health Center, Dejen woreda, Amhara

Dejen woreda (East Gojam) is located 70 km from Debre Markos town where Yetnore Health Center provides health services to the surrounding community. The health center teamed up with USAID/ENGINE in 2012 and set forth plans to improve the quality of care for patients. Some of the nutrition related services at the health post are; counseling for mothers and children under 5, follow up on delivery and post natal nutrition and carrying out cooking demonstrations once a month. The Health center manages six health posts and is the regional model for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), Antenatal Care (ANC) and counseling on nutrition. “Before ENGINE’s intervention, we would troubleshoot informally all of the challenges we faced. Now we have systemized our processes which minimize poor service. We maintain quality through training, conduct exit interviews and stock checks, provide counseling and ANC services and conduct regular checking of levels of under nutrition, and ensure iodized salt intake. All of these activities were all not available before so now, we are able to offer a holistic service.” Wonde Yebeltal, Delivery Case Team Head. The health center initially received training on CQI from USAID/ENGINE in 2012. The training enabled staff to then form a committee which started meeting every month. The committee consists of 10 members of staff working in various areas of the health center who also regularly attend health posts to carry out experience sharing meetings. “The monitoring of the quality of our services allows us to bring about timely actions to the issues we face. HEWs are carrying out daily house visits which means they can take action where needed straight away.” Another



way in which the committee ensures quality improvement is through carrying out analysis of the health care providers and giving honest feedback. Nineteen sample documentation of clients are analyzed to see if adequate quality of service has been delivered. Clients are then interviewed to further analyze the quality of care. After this, a 3 step process action is taken on poor performing areas. “We are also in the process of developing a survey to get feedback on our services. This is a direct result of ENGINE making us conscientious about delivering quality service. We gather to see if documentations are being carried out properly and gap filling assessments are carried out. For example, Zinc shortage was an issue we rectified with this process. We tackle all angles using our QI annex. Reporting is also improving. The changes are sustainable because QI activities were added to an already established committee, who carry out performance monitoring so that the quality of our services are not compromised even after the lifetime of the ENGINE project.” Says Wonde.

## Quality Improvement/Gender



*Ayale Mekonen, Emebet Demelash and Shitaw Antenigus, 3 of 4 HEWs at Yetnore Health Post, Dejen woreda, Amhara*

Ayale Mekonen, Emebet Demelash and Shitaw Antenigus are three of the total four Health Extension Workers (HEWs) providing care to 9300 patients in the Dejen woreda within the Amhara region. Some of their tasks include the follow up of pregnant women and mothers of children under 5, nutrition counseling and conducting bimonthly cooking demonstrations to teach mothers to use their resources to feed their children a diversified diet. USAID/ENGINE has brought considerable change to how these services are carried out by providing extensive training to the HEWs. The biggest difference is a change

in attitude says Ayale, who has been a HEW for 10 years. “We saw mothers who did not have resources to feed their children properly, but we also treated those who were negligent or unaware of the damage improper nutrition could have on their children. Now we have engaged the mothers and we even have their husbands attending our cooking demonstrations.” The HEWs attend quarterly review meetings in the woreda’s health office and have, through gender sensitization trainings been made aware of the importance of including men in their activities. “We used to only concentrate our efforts on women, but since we started inviting men of influence such as elders and religious leaders, we have found that our messages are more widely accepted. It’s also important to include men for nutrition in particular so that they know that the meat and milk their animals produce should be consumed by their families instead of just selling them at the market.” Emebet Demelash, HEW. Another method used by the HEWs in maintaining a high quality care is through household visits. One household per day is randomly assessed by the HEWs who document what a particular household’s mother and infant are consuming for a period of 24 hours. This, say the health workers helps them keep track of whether or not the messages on nutrition are getting through. “Although this is time consuming, it’s a very effective way to bring about change in nutritional habits.” says Emebet. “When we take notes of what the households are actually consuming, we analyze it and then take immediate actions, for example stronger promotion of whatever food group we find to be lacking in the majority of households.”

## Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC)

Twenty eight year old Tirualem Damte lives with her husband and two children aged eight and three. She was selected as a USAID/ENGINE beneficiary when she was a few months pregnant with her youngest daughter. She describes how USAID/ENGINE transformed her life, “We had no idea we shouldn’t work so much during pregnancy and immediately after giving birth. I learnt I should eat five times a day while pregnant, breastfeeding techniques and the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, using the juice from vegetables to make porridge for my baby, the importance of including animal products, using mats children to keep them clean. I also learnt about washing our hands after using the toilet whereas before we only used cloths to clean ourselves. I learnt about the different food groups.” As she became more financially enabled, Tirualem says her diet changed. “We could only afford to eat shiro [spiced chickpea stew] three times a day. Now we have so many different food groups in our diet. My children often eat eggs in the morning and various other food groups throughout the day. I can say now I have the knowledge on how to feed my children properly. That to me is greater than wealth!” As



*Mother of 2, Tirualem Damte with her youngest daughter and ECC posters ,Takuse woreda, Amhara*



a member of the Enhanced Community Conversation (ECC) group in her community through which USAID/ENGINE uses Community Change Agents (CCAs) to teach mothers, fathers and grandmothers of young children about nutritional practices, Tirualem says she has completely changed the dietary practices of her family. In addition to nutrition the group also learns about becoming financially empowered, “I learnt about the importance of saving. I have posters on my walls so that when my friends and neighbors come over to have coffee, I can show them and share with them what I have learnt.” Another area where the ECCs have brought change to Tirualem’s life is her relationship with her husband. “My husband’s friend came to visit one day and saw the [ECC] posters on my wall and was opposing many of the messages. My husband told him he was wrong and he should change with the times. That’s when I knew he would support me fully.” Tirualem describes how her husband took on traditionally female roles while she was pregnant and after she gave birth to their second child. “He would carry water and make stew for all of us, after asking me for recipes, he wouldn’t even let me help.” Sefialem Andarge, a Health Extension Worker in the Takuse woreda where Tirualem lives agrees that lives have been transformed by the project. “We had a high rate of diarrhoea in the area. Through the support of the project we have helped a lot of babies who otherwise might not have survived. The only area in which Tirualem says she could be helped further is through the improvement of the ECCs’ radio programs. “The radio programs are quite speedy and hard for us to follow. We have little formal education and often attend the ECC meetings with our children who can be distracting. We are not able to rewind the messages so it would greatly improve our understanding if they were slowed down.”

## Capacity Building



*Degsew Abra, Dejen woreda Administration Head, Amhara*

A multi-sector coordination body was set up in the Dejen woreda which manages 23 kebeles to ensure that nutrition is integrated into all sectors' activities set forth by the Government of Ethiopia's National Nutrition Program (NNP) in 2013. As a result of the strengthening of the agendas of the NNP by USAID/ENGINE and its work with woreda officials, the multi sector coordination body that has been set up works to ensure that nutrition is in-built into all of its work and remains a priority. "We meet monthly to assess the work being carried out. We plan for the future, divide up kebeles, do gap filling planning and put them into action. What makes our woreda unique is that we have a separate budget for the NNP. We have allotted 1000 ETB to spend on coordinating." Said Getachew Atiku, Water Supply Officer at the Woreda Water Office. The coordination body uses various methods to engage stakeholders in improving the nutritional status of community members, "We have coffee ceremonies with health professionals. We invite government workers and discuss the importance of on-the-job training." Getachew Restu, Women's Affairs Administrator. Teferra Teku, Ministerial Affairs Officer at the woreda Administration Office agrees. "We now have a committee that's dedicated to bringing about change. As a result, we have witnessed some shifts in nutritional practices. The community no longer uses salt from the market and only buys iodized salt. They have also stopped buying expired products and look at the date of expiration before purchasing food items. We have greater controls on ensuring that harmful food items are not sold. Women have become more independent and feed their children a balanced diet. Farmers use home-stead garden products and eat better." The coordination body also describes some of the difficulties they have experienced and plan to rectify in the future. Budget shortage is an issue that affects many of their planned activities. The slabs for toilets provided by the project they also admit are not of good quality and distribution has had to be halted due to health and safety concerns. Nevertheless, the partnership of USAID/ENGINE with the woreda is regarded by the committee members as crucial in the implementation of the NNP plans. "We were not fully aware of the importance of nutrition before the NNP and ENGINE. Now the nine sectors have nutrition focal persons and follow up programs more closely, report monthly and as a result have seen a lot of change. Because we have seen this for ourselves, this year we will add even more to the budget to tackle under nutrition. We have to plan for the sustainability and strengthening our systems beyond the lifetime of ENGINE." Degsew Abra, Woreda Administration Head.



# USAID/ENGINE Case Studies (East Oromia)

## Multi-sector coordination



*Wonde Yebeltal, Delivery Case Team Head at Yetnore Health Center, Dejen woreda, Amhara*

With technical support from USAID/ENGINE, Yaya Gulele woreda established a multi-sector coordination committee to implement the National Nutrition Program (NNP). The committee of 13 members mapped out roles and responsibilities related to nutrition for each sector. “Change has definitely been brought about. They [households] are learning from each other which is great because it means the changes will be sustainable.” Tadesse Wagjira, Woreda Administration Office Head. Tadesse also stated, “The NNP was not implemented effectively in the woreda before the project’s interventions. Agriculture related experience sharing and training is really effective.” Girma Tulu from the Disasters Office, a member of the committee agrees, “Before ENGINE, the trainings we received were theoretical. Now we are getting onsite practical trainings which is making us more efficient at our jobs.” USAID/ENGINE partners with the woreda with the leadership of the coordination body to achieve nutritional, health and economic growth through improvements in dietary diversity, strengthened nutrition sensitive livelihoods, behavior change and WASH improvements. The maintenance and construction of water sources by USAID/ENGINE was especially appreciated, “We have had a lot of support. A lot of our water

facilities were malfunctioning. We didn't have the budget to fix or maintain them. After working with ENGINE, each kebele formed a team and started a water saving group so that the work being done can carry on after our interventions. Each kebele and the community now feel a sense of ownership over their water sources." Says Hailu Tibebu, Water Office. "We have found that interlinked interventions are effective." Beriso Kofa, Woreda Sanitation Focal Person, "Open defecation has dramatically decreased since we started our WASH interventions with ENGINE." The committee's current priorities include improving the quality of onion and potato seeds which were poor the past year and combating severe acute malnutrition.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH), Community



*Abandoned water point due to malfunction*



*Restored water source*

Nono Chemen kebele, in Yaya Gulele woreda had three water points built by the Government of Ethiopia in 1997 which served approximately 2000 households. USAID/ENGINE provided financial and material support to woreda employees who worked to restore the malfunctioning water points. "A lot of households used to use the source but abandoned it for about 2 years because of damage and the water line being broken. We then proposed that ENGINE helps us restore these water points. We got approval for 3 sites in 3 kebeles which meant that we could fix 17 water points in total. We provided the labor force and the water sources became functional." Said Berhanu Eshetu, Process Owner of Community Mobilization, Yaya Gulele woreda Water Office. To instill a sense of ownership, three WASH committees were formed, trained and provided with maintenance tools to maintain and upkeep their community's new water sources. "The water committee gave training to sixteen people in January 2016. The training included usage and practical training on maintenance." Balancing supply and demand is a challenge the committees have grappled with as the population of the community is increasing and the woreda simply not having the budget to meet the additional demand.



## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH), Household



*Mother of 5, Sintayehu Shimeles (37), using her water filter, East Oromia*

Sintayehu Shimeles aged 37 is a resident of the Nono Chemen kebele, Yaya Gulele woreda and mother of five children. Selected as a USAID/ENGINE beneficiary in 2013, Sintayehu was provided with vegetables seeds for a homestead garden as well as four sheep. Through training she received from the project, Sintayehu managed to grow enough vegetables for her to consume as well as sell in her local market and reared her livestock, greatly improving her financial standing by selling off some of her stock. “We used to sell the best produce to get more money, now we consume the best and sell the rest. We didn’t know the value of our vegetables towards improving our health. Now we have become aware that nutrition is more important than money in the long run for our health and mental development which can’t be bought!” Sintayehu described how her life was altered by the project, “After we received the sheep from ENGINE we reared them sold some of them and bought a heifer and became financially stable.” Says Sintayehu. “Our food is so much richer now. We have milk and butter which I enjoy with my children.” Her life has also been transformed through the WASH interventions of the USAID/ENGINE project. “We used to be infested with flies. We would also drink contaminated water from the local stream because we thought we had no options.” Sintayehu saw change in her and her children’s lives when she purchased a water filter for 310 ETB from a project supported WASH group. “I was happy to pay that much and drink clean water. I didn’t mind because our healthcare costs were much more. We used to use rocks to cover our toilets which spread a lot of bacteria. Now we have slabs and use our tippy taps afterwards. My children hardly get ill now.”



## Capacity Building



*Wonde Yebeltal, Delivery Case Team Head at Yetnore Health Center, Dejen woreda, Amhara*

Messay Zewde is the nutrition focal person at the Yaya Gulele Health center located in Yaya Gulele woreda in Oromia. He gives his account of the change brought about by the USAID/ENGINE project saying, “A lot of things have improved since ENGINE. The nutrition practices of households have drastically changed. Before we started working with the project, there was a lot of misconception about diet diversity. They [households] thought a good diet had to do with consuming a lot of meat. Through the project, they learnt about how to properly feed their children during the first 1000 days. We used cooking demonstrations to show them practically how to prepare their meals and almost all are now using iodized salt which was not a common practice before.” As awareness changed, health seeking behaviors increased and as a result, according to Messay, malnourished children have decreased by 25% during the last 5 years in the woreda. Messay says this is because people have taken ownership at all levels. “Mothers and young children have benefited most from the project’s partnership with us. Households used to sell off their vegetables and anything that they grew whereas now they consume some and sell what is leftover. Even our own practices at the health center have changed. With regards to Mother and Child Health (MCH) services, we used to just treat them and send them away. Now, through counseling we are doing preventative work not just treatment. The skills of health workers have been developed as the project has helped us in not just addressing financial gaps but also skills gaps.” Starting in 2012, USAID/ENGINE provided training and mentoring to health professionals in the health center and the health posts to improve their skills. Messay suggests that the changes brought about by the projects will be further strengthened with the provisions of additional trainings and supportive supervision, including around data quality. This, he says will close down the gaps in the skill levels of nutrition personnel at the woreda level.

# USAID/ENGINE Case Studies (SNNPR)

## Nutrition Specific Interventions



*Health extension worker, Elsa showing mothers how to prepare nutritious meals, SNNPR*

Elsa Desalegn, 21, is a Health Extension Worker (HEW) at Moroncho Goriche health post, in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State, Ethiopia. She serves more than 8000 people in her locality. As a health extension worker, she provides services such as immunization to under 5 children, growth monitoring of young children, family planning, Anti Natal Care (ANC), Postnatal Care (PNC), treatment of children with common childhood illnesses and conducts regular home visits and

provides nutrition counseling. “I am the only health extension worker serving the local community which at times I have found to be very challenging as it is difficult to reach as many people as I would like to. As a health extension worker here in this village, I deliver services both at the health post and by going home-to-home.” Says Elsa. Elsa goes on to describe some of her duties as a health extension worker, “The most important thing we do is counseling – giving advice to mothers. We advise mothers on the importance of feeding themselves and their young children nutritious foods as this will help to make their bodies strong enough to resist diseases. We also organize cooking demonstration sessions every month at the health post level and in the village. This helps to educate mothers on how to prepare nutritious food for children above six months of age using food that is available at their home. We explain using pictures ENGINE provided us with to show them how to keep their children healthy and well-fed.” On average, 25-30 mothers attend each cooking demonstration session. Although the attendees often have the variety of food items at home, Elsa says they rarely use them effectively as they lack knowledge on how to prepare nutritious meals. “Through the cooking demonstrations, we practically show them how to mix the ingredients with edible oil and feed their children and themselves.” USAID/ENGINE provides training to Health Extension Workers (HEWs), on the importance of dietary diversity and counseling. With the knowledge Elsa acquired from the training, Elsa is able to provide counseling to pregnant and lactating women as well as mothers who have children below 5 years. She also carries out regular visits and gives advice to pregnant women on the importance of giving birth at the health center. Elsa testifies that nowadays, the number of women coming to the health center has increased and her clients even travel from very distant places to get the crucial services provided by her and the center. This year alone, 52 mothers have given birth assisted by a skilled birth attendant at the health center where Elsa works. “Compared to previous years, there is now a huge improvement on maternal and child health in our locality.” Says Elsa proudly.

## Livelihood



*Beseatu Mofida with three of her children and her chicken coop, SNNPR*

Married for half of her life, Beseatu Mofida, 30, became the sole breadwinner for her family when her husband was paralyzed in a car accident. Living in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) of Ethiopia, Mofida and her young children survived on eating ensete—a plant locally known as ‘false banana’ that is a staple food of low nutrient quality—flavored with chili. Mofida knew her children were poorly fed and had difficulty concentrating in school, but she lacked op-



portunities to increase her income in her rural village. In February 2012, when her youngest, Ramate Mohe, was just nine months old, USAID/ENGINE selected Mofida and her family to participate in poultry and homestead gardening interventions aimed at improving maternal and child nutrition within the first 1,000 days spanning the time from pregnancy till a child turns two. To improve her children's diet diversity, Mofida received 10 hens and two cockerels. These chickens were healthier, better able to withstand disease, and produced more eggs, an improvement over the ones she had raised in the past. Mofida also received training on poultry management and learned to prepare homemade feed by mixing nutritious ingredients. One of the feed ingredients, noug cake, was not readily available in the local market, so USAID/ENGINE and the district agricultural office facilitated the logistics to introduce noug cake to the area. Every day at 6 a.m., Mofida dedicatedly cleans the coop and provides the flock with fresh water and feed. She also allows the hens to graze to improve the vitamin A content of their eggs, a strategy to prevent a common micronutrient deficiency among children in the region. Since the intervention, Mofida's hens produce more than enough eggs for her family to consume, allowing her to sell the excess. With this new income, she purchases iodized salt, meat, cereals for injera, and coffee as well as household items. Thanks to the homestead garden seeds she received from the project, new vegetables have been introduced to the household, and she mixes and prepares these vegetables using recipes from cooking demonstrations organized by the Health Extension Workers (HEWs) in her woreda. "I don't have to worry about buying vegetables now," she said. "I grow everything I need here in my own garden." By sharing produce and insights on poultry management with her neighbors, Mofida has grown into a leader among her community members. Many neighbors own local chickens known for their brooding rather than their egg laying. Every 18 months, as the chickens age, the flock's egg production decreases. So Mofida replaces them by hatching 12 eggs, and she sells the cockerels to her neighbors, knowing that breeding the cockerels with local-breed hens increases the chances of producing healthier chickens. Other women in the community have joined Mofida in creating a village savings group to bridge their financial security from the productive season through the rainy season, when egg production is at its lowest. Mofida is well on her way toward her goal of saving enough for the entrance fee to the local microfinance institution so that, in the future, she may receive a microenterprise loan.

## Livelihood

After her husband died of HIV/AIDS, Shewawork Neji of Gassa Wude village in Enemor woreda of Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) did not know how she was going to feed her eight children who were living on her brother's property. The 15 chickens of local breed she raised, unreliably produced only a handful of eggs which her children consumed without satiety so she relied on feeding the children kocho (false banana) with chili. Shewawork's only means of earning a living was selling false banana. Unable to pay for school supplies, none of her children attended school. In February 2012, when Shewawork's youngest child, Ezedin Abdulhadid, was just five months old, after being selected as a beneficiary, USAID/ENGINE restocked her chicken flock with 12 vaccinated chickens of an improved breed



*Shewawork and her youngest child Ezedin now four years old, SNNPR*

and assisted her in planting a homestead vegetable garden. Shewawork learned to mix ingredients to make a homemade chicken feed and other management techniques to support her chickens when egg-laying production is low. Homestead gardening introduced new vegetables such as carrot, Swiss chard, tomato, onions, cabbage and green beans to the household diet, which USAID/ENGINE taught her how to prepare into meals. Shewawork and her children describe these recipes as delicious. “I feel happy waking up when I know I can feed my children,” she says. Now on her second round of chickens, Shewawork has more than doubled her flock. Harvesting eight eggs per day, half of which her children consume and the other half is sold in the community. Shewawork saves money for chicken feed during the rainy season through a community savings group of USAID/ENGINE beneficiaries. After a year of saving 10 ETB per month, she was able to pay the entrance fee to the Omo Microfinance Institution, qualifying her to receive a loan of 5,000 ETB. Shewawork plans to double her income by using a loan to purchase coffee, wheat and other nonperishable items during the productive season and then selling them during the rainy season when prices increase. Eventually, she plans to open a village store. Thanks to USAID-funded projects like ENGINE that provide new skills and resources that empower rural mothers, most vulnerable households like Shewawork are able to provide their children with healthy food and become financially independent. “My children were poorly nourished because I did not know how to feed them. After ENGINE, everything changed. My children’s thinking capacities improved. All of them but the four year old are in school now.”

## Pre-service Education



*Mary Harvey, USAID Nutrition Coordinator and Ayano Beraso Hawassa University Vice President officially launching the Academic Center of Excellence for Nutrition, SNNPR*

USAID/ENGINE launched the Academic Center of Excellence for Nutrition on April 2, 2015 at Hawassa University. The Center will contribute to the reduction of under-nutrition among women and children by creating an excellent academic environment that links training, high quality and innovative community-based nutrition services and nutrition research. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH), Ethiopian Public Health Institution and other stakeholders, the Center will promote and advance the revised National Nutrition Program (NNP) and will contribute on impact at national, regional, district, and community levels. The USAID/ENGINE project aims to improve the nutritional status of Ethiopian women and children under age five through sustainable, coordinated, and evidence-based interventions, enabling them to lead healthier and more productive lives. In collaboration with Hawassa University, Jhpiego the organization that leads the project's pre-service education component initiated and collaborated on the establishment of an Academic Center of Excellence for Nutrition by building upon existing human resources and facilities at the institution through training staff, strengthening and standardizing the nutrition curriculum, renovating and equipping the skills lab and providing key educational materials like reference books and audiovisual materials. USAID/ENGINE also coordinated efforts to mobilize resources from various local and international partners to the center.



# USAID/ENGINE Case Studies (Tigray)

## Gender



*Kiros Kindeya, HEW counseling a patient, Tigray*

Kiros Kindeya is a Health Extension Worker (HEW) at the Mahan health post located in South Tigray. She is one of two health extension workers, serving the community and has seen a significant shift in the health of the patients she serves since the project's interventions. USAID/ENGINE has enhanced the capacity of the health workers, provided nutrition, Quality Improvement (QI), MIYCN, WASH and gap filling training and has created awareness on the importance of gender sensitization of health workers in order to ensure the implementations are sustainable. *"After receiving gender training from ENGINE we realized that there was no point working with women on behavior change and their health if we did not also have the men on the same wavelength, willing to support these changes. It was only then that we saw the changes stick."* The HEWs have since started involving men in many of their activities including cooking demonstrations carried out monthly, counseling on breastfeeding and nutrition for mothers and have in addition conducted fathers' group meetings where discussions take place over tea and coffee on behavior change and gender roles and responsibilities.

## Livelihood / Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH)

Thirty three year old Kidane Ayele used to struggle to make ends meet. She used to survive by selling tea and coffee on the streets of Mahan, Tigray. Her financial hardships were further exasperated when she had to undergo two operations leaving her in a desperate situation while she was also supporting her sister's four children ranging in age from two months to 10 years old. Selected as a USAID/ENGINE beneficiary in 2012, Kidane received four sheep which she reared to nine. She then sold five of her new livestock and with 65% of her own capital and 35% from USAID/ENGINE she purchased a heifer. This meant that the whole family started drinking milk which was not a part of their diet before as they could not afford it. Vegetables were also introduced to the family's diet with seed and tool provisions as well as training on the skills of vegetable production from USAID/ENGINE. Using the seeds and her new skills, Kidane



*Kidane Ayele uses her feet to operate her tippy tap to avoid contamination, Tigray*

grew in her homestead garden; cabbage, collard greens, greens, carrots beetroot and apples. Her vegetables not only improved her and her family's diet, but by selling the surplus Kidane was able to join a saving group of 15 members where she would save 10 ETB every two weeks. The group which has collectively saved more than 7800 ETB generates income by selling latrine slabs and other hygiene materials to the wider community. "I used to feel so helpless." Kidane says referring to the then two month old she was in charge of bringing up due to her sister's mental illness. "I could see that he wasn't growing because I wasn't feeding him properly. But I didn't have the means to give him nutritious foods. Now I look at him and he is thriving, I am so happy." Kidane still faces some hurdles such as water shortage during the dry season affecting the yield of vegetables in her garden due to insufficient water. She does feel however that she is now in a position to face those challenges head on and plans to set up a legal entity and a place of storage for the saving group's collectively bought livestock so that they are properly looked after and given medical attention.



## Capacity Building



*Goitom Alemie, Woreda Administration Head, Endamehoni, Tigray*

On December 6, 2014, following the regional launch of the National Nutrition Program (NNP) in 2013, two multi-sector committees, (coordination and technical) were formed by four functional sectors namely; health, agriculture, women's affairs and education in the Endamehoni woreda of the Tigray region. The committee was a result of a partnership between woreda officials and the USAID/ENGINE project bringing to life the goals of the NNP. Discussions between each kebele on what the NNP was, how it can be implemented were held before a plan was formed. Responsibilities were then assigned to each sector through which the deputies of each sector's office would take on the additional tasks in order to bring about a holistic change for the community. According to Goitom Alemie, Woreda Administration Head, prior to the work carried out by the committee, pregnant and expectant mothers did not receive any special treatment and men and children were the priority in households. *"ENGINE helped us link nutrition to gender issues. Households did not realize that poor health and stunting were a result of an unbalanced diet. So we conducted trainings to improve male involvement and ran awareness campaigns on changing nutritional practices to improve the health of mothers and children in most vulnerable households."* The coordination and technical committees helped facilitate the trainings provided by USAID/ENGINE to ensure the sustainability of the efforts. Importantly, checklists were developed and the committees monitored kebeles to ensure they had action plans and that activities were being carried out and to identify and correct any gaps.



## Livelihood



Goitom Alemie, Woreda Administration Head, Endamehoni, Tigray

Mother of four, Behafta Haile, 38, found out she had contracted the HIV virus 10 years ago. As a result of being ostracized by her community for carrying the disease, she and her two children at the time had to leave her marital home and community and move in with her mother. In 2012, after being selected as a USAID/ENGINE beneficiary, Behafta was provided with three sheep and five varieties of vegetable seedlings to plant in her home-stead garden. Through training she received from the project, she managed to rear the sheep to ten and then sold five of them to buy a pregnant heifer through USAID/ENGINE's subsidizing scheme of 65%/35%. It wasn't all easy though as Behafta recollects some challenges she faced even after being selected. She encountered several hyena attacks on her sheep. Despite this, she remained optimistic, *"For the first time I didn't feel helpless. I sold the sheep and bought goats because goats unlike sheep make noise when being attacked which means we can intervene. I was financially in a place to help myself for once."* In addition to raising her family's income and although not a common practice in the region, goat milk has also been added to the family's dietary intake. Behafta then became the leader of a 14 member saving group with intentions of providing further security for her family. The group which started out saving just 10 ETB a month has now bought 60 chickens and has constructed a shelter for their livestock at a cost of 15,000 ETB. *"My life has changed dramatically in just a couple of years. I used to make stew and wait for my husband to get back before eating. If he didn't come home for the whole day, I still wouldn't eat until he did. My children used to get sick because they were exposed to animal feces and were not fed properly. But since the intervention, I make sure my children and I eat properly and maintain our sanitation and hygiene. I have benefited from the education I received as much as the material provisions I got from ENGINE. I can even say it saved my children's life as my twins [born after the intervention] did not contract the virus as I was able to get the proper medical advice which made me take precautions."*

# USAID/ENGINE Case Studies (West Oromia)

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH)



*Three of the 25 member WASH saving group in the Emela Dawi Kebele; Zenash Berhanu, (Secretary) Berki Bedada , (Cashier) and Danso Gebre (Vice Chair), West Oromia*

Zenash Berhanu, mother of two, Berki Bedada, mother of three, and Danso Gebre, mother of four have all benefited from the USAID/ENGINE project since 2012. Within a month of being selected as project beneficiaries, they with 22 additional households in Emela Dawi kebele formed a saving group. The saving group which is registered and supported by government institutions has enabled the beneficiaries to organize and sustain their activities. Prior to forming the group, credit was not easily accessible to most vulnerable households as the banks did not have sufficient guarantee of repayment, however Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) are now willing to work with the saving groups as they have increased their assets. The group generates income by selling floor mats for children and water filters. Although the group encountered some difficulties with selling the water filters as many households felt the water source was clean enough and the cost of the filter was too high, the sale of floor mats and surplus vegetables from their homestead garden has meant they are financially independent and can provide



for their families. “These were really vulnerable people, thanks to ENGINE they managed to save a little bit of money which then became a resource for them to gain loans and their lives have changed as a result.” Said Frehiwot Amanu, Woreda Cooperative Promotion Expert. Alongside selling WASH materials the group also generates income by giving out loans to their members and receiving repayments with interest. “We started out saving two ETB every two weeks, then as our capital grew; we got up to 10 ETB every month. Our lives improved in so many ways. We eat more vegetables from our homestead garden, have bought heifers through the project’s subsidy scheme and some of us have even built houses using our extra income.” Zenash Berhanu, Secretary of the saving group.

## Quality Improvement (QI)

Boda health center located in the Boda Wosoka kebele, in Dendi woreda has seen a transformation in the lives of its patients since USAID/ENGINE began collaborating to improve the quality of service at the facility. Fourteen staff members were trained on Quality Improvement (QI) including the enhancement of reporting and registration processes. The center which manages seven health posts has seen an improvement in counseling services and joint integrated supportive supervision. “Before our QI trainings, there were even deliveries that went unreported. After we got the training, every step from pregnancy to postnatal care is



*Tirunesh Geremew, Primary Health Care Unit Head at Boda health center, West Oromia*

recorded. A new focus on nutrition has had a positive impact on our other services too in terms of antenatal and postnatal care. The flow of patients has increased along with frequency of their visits. Patients are now satisfied with the new high quality services we offer.” Tirunesh Geremew, Primary Health Care Unit Head. The trainings provided by the project included QI, general Maternal Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) and counseling. “We make sure crucial medication such as ORS, zinc and iron foliate are ordered before we run out to maintain quality.” Says Tirunesh. QI of nutrition services has encouraged more frequent visits from mothers, not only increasing the flow of visitors but also in their visits occurring earlier in their pregnancy. Postnatal care has also improved as new mothers stay at the health center for longer, usually for a day or two. Family planning is another area where QI has altered the services provided. Patients are now counseled and given information prior to conception so that they can take the necessary precautions and actions for their family. Referral linkage has also been strengthened with other health facilities contributing to QI results. The health center plans to address challenges such as improving the means of transportation to reach households which is currently scarce as the health center has only one motorbike which the HEWs are not able to operate, making their household visits less frequent.



## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH)



*Ayantu Duro using her water filter, West Oromia*

Ayantu Duro from Dendi woreda was selected as a USAID/ENGINE beneficiary in 2012. Her circumstances were dire, having lost a child and her husband to illness and subsequently seeing her cattle perish due to improper care and lack of cattle feed. With three children now aged ranging from 21 to 15 and a grandchild of three years old, of which she is the primary caregiver, she recounts the troublesome times she faced, “My children were not doing well in school. We had land but we didn’t have the means of planting anything on it.” Ayantu’s life was transformed when as a USAID/ENGINE beneficiary; she received five types of vegetable seeds and tools for her homestead garden. She grew and consumed the vegetables and sold the surplus for income which she used to buy chickens and sheep. With the money from the sale of her small livestock, Ayantu then bought a heifer and reared two calves while also getting milk for her household. She also participated in the Enhanced Community Conversations (ECCs) and became a member of a saving group for which she was chosen as a leader because of her active participation and willingness to be an example to her community. “As soon as I came home [from the session] I placed the ECC posters on my wall. I then bought a water filter for 330 ETB and showed my neighbors how clean the water I was getting was.” Her understanding of the importance of clean water is the reason she says she was able to convince so many of her friends and neighbors to purchase the water filters. “A lot of people would suffer from malaria and spend their earnings on medical bills, so why would they hold back from buying the water filter? I helped them see sense.” The WASH saving group led by Ayantu has performed well in selling the water filters despite some community members finding them too expensive. Ayantu and her saving group gather community members and teach them how to use the water filters and give out extensive information on the benefits of using clean water. They plan to work with the woreda Agriculture Office in order to reach more people with this lifesaving tool. “I even wash my clothes with filtered water; I don’t want any unclean water around me, my children or grandchild.”

## Livelihood



*Zenebech Bekele with one of her four grandchildren, West Oromia*

Thirty seven year old Zenebech Bekele has three children and four grandchildren. Married in 1990, at just 12 years old, she started to fall ill and could no longer work in the fields or tend to the family's cattle. "My husband used to take medicine without telling me he had HIV for seven years. My hair started falling out and I was getting lesions all over my neck and arms. People started to ostracize me and wouldn't even drink from the cups in my house. I was isolated. I became a daily laborer to avoid my former neighbors but I couldn't make ends meet. People were judgmental and would say I shouldn't have contracted the disease at this age." Things began to slowly improve for Zenebech when a neighbor who was informed about the condition invited her over for coffee. "I was surprised when she didn't mind allowing me to use her utensils. She understood how the virus is transmitted and because of her I began to get acceptance from the other members of my community. However, I was forced at the time to give my children away to my brother because I could no longer afford to look after them." In 2012, Zenebech who was now looking after her four grandchildren was chosen as a USAID/ENGINE beneficiary. She recalls the changes brought about by the project to her everyday life. "I used to only eat barley. I was then given four sheep [by the project] and reared them to 11. With the money I got from selling my livestock, I bought wood and metal and built a second home." From the sale of her small livestock, Zenebech also bought a heifer through USAID/ENGINE's cost share system. This meant that the family now had access to milk, butter and other vital food groups. Zenebech yields about three liters of milk from her heifer and even shares it with her neighbors. With vegetables from her homestead garden and chickens she purchased with her new income, the family now enjoys a varied and healthy diet. Her grandchildren are in school and Zenebech says the symptoms of her illness have lessened as a result of her improved diet. "I was hated by my own community but now it's the reverse. People don't even believe I have the illness now because I look so healthy from eating well." In the future, Zenebech plans to build a shelter for her cattle as milk production reduces with rain. "I have hope and feel I can live a good life now. I can sustain myself. I have no worries about where my next meal is coming from."



## Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC)



*Tadele Merga, 40, husband of USAID/ENGINE target Meseret Gutama with ECC posters, West Oromia*

Mother of three Meseret Gutama, aged 32 was selected as a USAID/ENGINE beneficiary and participated in the Enhanced Community Conversations (ECCs) initiated by the project. The ECCs groups reach mothers, fathers and grandmothers of children under five and teach them about important nutrition practices as well as behaviors crucial to maintaining health such as WASH and gender roles. “When I first got selected, I got training on how to plant, cook and store vegetables. We got practical training on how to change our lives. We also shared what we know with neighbors because they saw how changing our diets improved our appearance and health.” Meseret who shared what she had learnt with her husband Tadele Merga, 40, describes how his behavior altered as she brought home the materials explaining gender roles and information she had obtained from the sessions. “My husband helps out with everything I do now. We used to have our roles defined. I did most of the household chores. I used to walk for one hour every day to fetch water. Now he brings water and even washes clothes.” In addition to the ECCs, the project also carried out a gender sensitization workshop which Meseret’s husband attended. Meseret says his behavior was further changed by what he learnt at the training. “My husband does what he can to help now from grinding coffee to carrying water and wood. When I was pregnant with my last child, he wanted me to rest the whole time. He goes to market buys food items and even cooks sometimes. He helps with tending to our child as well. I don’t wash clothes anymore.” The ECC materials have helped the family sustain the new behaviors and they have also shared what they have learnt with visitors to their home. “Some of my husband’s friends are now emulating what he does after asking what the posters say and having him explain it to them. He washes clothes proudly outside and this has also made others think about the roles they take on to help their wives.”



Save the Children leads the implementation of Empowering New Generations to Improve Nutrition and Economic opportunities (ENGINE) – USAID’s flagship multi-sector nutrition project, which aims to improve the nutritional status of Ethiopian women and children through sustainable, coordinated, and evidence-based interventions, enabling them to lead healthier and more productive lives.

The core initiative of this large-scale, five-year project (2011-2016) is to prevent under-nutrition during the first 1,000 days by focusing on social behavior change, including linkages to livelihood and economic opportunities. ENGINE builds upon the Government of Ethiopia’s initiatives and renewed commitment to nutrition as well as the U.S. Government’s Global Health and Feed the Future initiatives.

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***This report is made possible by the support of the American people through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under Agreement No. AID-663-A-11-00017. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of Save the Children and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.***

